GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2696
ANSWERED ON:01.08.2017
Celebrity Endorsements
Bala Smt. Anju;Sreeramulu Shri B.

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has proposed to ban celebrities from doing endorsements if found guilty of being part of a misleading advertisement, if so, the details thereof;
(b) whether the Government is also considering jail term and capital punishment to celebrities found guilty under the proposed law as recommended by Parliamentary panel, if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether the Government has set up a committee to address consumer grievances on GST/tax related queries and directed companies to reprint revised rates on unsold goods as it is mandatory to print revised MRP on the inventory, else stringent action will be taken for violation of the Packaged Commodities Rules; and
(d) whether the Government has amended Rules under Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to fix retail prices of packed and loose Essential Commodities; if so, the details thereof ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY)

(a) & (b) : The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution, which examined the Consumer Protection Bill, 2015, has recommended for a fine of Rs. 10 lakhs and imprisonment up to two years or both for first time offence and fine of Rs. 50 lakhs and imprisonment for five years for second time offence against endorsers of misleading advertisements. The recommendations are under consideration of the Government.

(c) : Under the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011, the Central Government has issued instructions permitting manufacturers or packers or importers of pre-packaged commodities to declare the changed retail sale price (MRP) on the unsold stock manufactured/packed/imported prior to 1st July, 2017 after inclusion of the increased amount of tax due to GST, if any, in addition to the existing MRP , for three months with effect from 1st July, 2017 to 30th September, 2017, by way of stamping or putting sticker or online printing. Further, for reducing the MRP, a sticker with the revised lower MRP (inclusive of all taxes) may be affixed and the same shall not cover the MRP declaration made by the manufacturer or the packer or importer, as the case may be, on the label of the package.

The Legal Metrology Act, 2009 and the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 provide for penalty for violation of the provisions.

The Department of Revenue has set up a helpline to address the queries/complaints related to GST. In the Department of Consumer Affairs, the grievances/complaints related to GST are handled by the National Consumer Helpline.

(d) : There are no Rules under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. As per section 3(1) and 3(2) (c) of the Act, the Central Government is empowered to fix prices of any essential commodity by way of orders.
*****